



Buckinghamshire County Council

Minutes

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON LIFELONG LEARNING

AGENDA ITEM: 3

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON LIFELONG LEARNING
HELD ON THURSDAY 14 APRIL 2005, IN MEZZANINE ROOM 1, COUNTY HALL,
AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 10.00AM AND CONCLUDING AT 12.15PM.**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mrs M Baldwin, Mr H Cadd, Mrs P Crawford, Mr D C T Graves, Ms L K Hazell, Mrs B H Jennings, Mr P Roberts, Mr J Ryman and Mr F Sweatman.

CO-OPTED MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr D Ashburner and Mr M Moore.

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mr S Bagnall, Mr R Edwards, Mrs S Imbriano, Mr N Powley, Mrs C Street and Mr C Williams.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies were received from Mr P Hardy, Mrs E Lay, Mr J Loarridge OBE and Mr H Wilson.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were declared.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2005, copies of which had been circulated previously, were agreed as a correct record.

Members were issued with a report entitled, 'Admissions Debrief' which had been circulated in connection with the additional item discussed at the March meeting concerning the allocation of secondary school places in Buckinghamshire. Members were asked to forward any comments on this to the Lead Officer for Scrutiny, and were reminded that the new Committee would consider this item further in the autumn.

4. GOOD NEWS ITEMS

None were reported.

5. SWAN AWARDS 2005: NEXT STEPS

Members were issued with a list of the awards, as proposed by the judging panel.

During discussion members commented on the difficulties that could be experienced by special schools in forging links with the community. The Chairman acknowledged this and suggested that special schools might need to be considered separately in the future. It was agreed that Furzedown special school should receive a full award as it had been able to cite many examples of community involvement, and the other special schools should be awarded highly commended.

Members agreed that from 2006 onwards there should be two types of award only, which would be the full award and commended.

6. PUPIL TRANSITION FROM PRIMARY TO SECONDARY EDUCATION

Members had been issued with a draft report on Pupil Transition from Primary to Secondary Education and were asked for any final comments they might have before the report was submitted to Cabinet.

It was noted that member's comments had been incorporated into the draft, as had a paragraph on the Transitions Support Team. Members discussed the fact that independent schools did not always pass on the relevant pupil information to the receiving school, and when they did so they did not always receive a response. It was agreed that this should be included in the report.

Members had no other comments to make and the report was agreed.

7. DEVELOPMENTS IN CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Members received presentations from the Chief Executive Officer, the Strategic Director for Schools and the Head of Policy, Planning, Commissioning and Performance, on the future organisation of services for children. The presentations mainly covered the changes that the Children's Acts and Children's Trusts would bring to the Council, the cross-cutting work between schools, social care and other partners, and the safeguarding agenda.

Members were issued with documents entitled:

- Every Child Matters - Key documents
- Schools Portfolio - School Management Briefing
- Every Child Matters - Outcomes Framework

The five key outcomes listed in the last document, which would form the basis of the Authority's work programme, were:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being.

Members were informed that there would be a lead person in the Authority for each of the key outcomes.

It was noted that a number of priority national targets and indicators would be linked to the key outcomes. The Authority would be able to include its own local targets. Members were informed that Buckinghamshire would have its own change programme to progress developments in the children's area. They were advised of changes to the inspection framework, which would focus particularly on looked after children, children on the child protection register, children with disabilities and children in need. The crucial role that the OSC would play in scrutinizing children's services was noted, as was the need for the Authority to hold its partners to account.

The Authority would appoint both a Director for Children's Services and a Lead Member. A Programme Manager had been appointed to assess how services were delivered to young people. A Steering Group had been set up to help facilitate changes and workshops for staff were being held to inform them of the forthcoming developments. By September 2005, recommendations would be made to Council concerning changes to the portfolio structure.

A member queried the composition of the new Local Safeguarding Board. The Chief Executive Officer responded that the current Area Child Protection Committee would be transformed into the Local Safeguarding Board but its membership had not yet been determined, because further guidance regarding this was awaited from government. Members further referred to the need for school inspections to be co-ordinated. The Strategic Director for Schools replied that it was the aim of the Authority to minimize disruption to schools, but OfSTED and not the County Council organized the inspections.

A member queried where scrutiny would fit into the new arrangements. This was not yet clear, but it was thought that, for example, the Children's Plan should be scrutinised.

Members were informed about the new safeguarding agenda, which would be much broader than focusing on children in need of protection, and which would be for all children. It was noted that there would be some training for teachers on safeguarding.

The officers were thanked for their informative presentations. The Strategic Director for Schools offered to provide members with more information regarding the developments in children's services, if required.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - (NEW COMMITTEE)

Thursday 26 May 2005, 10.00am, Mezzanine Room 1, County Hall, Aylesbury.

The Chairman paid tribute to the work of the Committee over the past year and thanked members and officers for all their efforts.

CHAIRMAN